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Identical letters dated 24 December 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to attach herewith a press statement dated 24 December 2013 (see annex), which is attributed to an official source at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the Syrian Arab Republic, regarding the attack by terrorist groups on sites containing chemical materials due to be transferred outside Syria.

It would be highly appreciated if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the identical letters dated 24 December 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

[Original: Arabic]

The Syrian Arab Republic has cooperated fully with the Secretariat of the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). Their cooperation has proved successful, and Syria is fulfilling its commitments under the Chemical Weapons Convention. That situation has provoked the anger of those parties that are plotting against Syria and supporting terrorist organizations. Armed terrorist groups have therefore carried out criminal attacks on sites storing the chemical weapons that are to be transferred out of the country under the agreements reached. On 21 December 2013, they attacked a site in central Syria in large numbers with convoys of vehicles mounted with heavy machine guns. Their aim was to occupy and destroy the site. The competent authorities repelled and thwarted the attack. The armed terrorist groups associated with the so-called Liwa' al-Islam and Nusrah Front have also attacked a site in Rif Dimashq, which they attempted to storm using an armoured car carrying large quantities of explosives. The forces on guard repelled the attack and detonated the car before it could enter the site, resulting in a massive explosion. Four soldiers were killed and 28 injured. Similar attempts are ongoing at the chemical weapons sites.

The attacks are but another sign of the groups' barbarity and their disregard for human life. They show that the terrorists are interested only in spilling blood and destroying anything that falls into their hands, as they have done all over Syria. Moreover, the attacks carry a high risk; the terrorists know full well that the targeted sites store dangerous chemicals. But the most important point is how the terrorist groups know what measures are being taken to transfer the materials out of Syria in cooperation with the United Nations and OPCW. In that regard, we wish to highlight the dangerous and irresponsible role of certain States, which are in contact with the armed groups and give them information regarding which dangerous chemicals are stored at the locations and what measures are being taken to transfer them out of Syria. Those States encourage the terrorists to attack the sites. They leak information that is highly confidential in the context of responsible international action.

Syria strongly condemns those well-known States' support for the terrorist groups. It holds them fully responsible for the threat posed by the leaking of such information, and for any disaster that may ensue. Syria calls on the relevant international organizations, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of OPCW to make every necessary effort to prevail upon those irresponsible States, which have openly declared their support for terrorism in Syria, to desist from such potentially cataclysmic practices and bring an end to their involvement in this dangerous matter. Syria reiterates its full commitment to implementing all of the commitments arising from its voluntary and sovereign accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention.